



Machel Study 10-year Strategic Review



Concept Note for a Strategic Review On the 10th Anniversary of the “Machel Study”, The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children

26 August 2006 marked the 10th anniversary of the ground-breaking, United Nations report, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* (A/51/306), widely known as the “Machel Study”. The report was the result of a two-year study requested in General Assembly resolution 48/157 and led by Graça Machel, expert of the Secretary General. The 1996 report proposed a comprehensive agenda for action by Member States and the international community to improve the protection of children’s rights and their care in conflict situations. In its resolution of 12 December 1996 (A/RES/51/77), the General Assembly welcomed the report and its recommendations, including the establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG/CAAC).

In her 2006-2007 strategic plan, the Special Representative proposed a 10 year Strategic Review of the Machel Study.¹ The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) readily agreed on the timeliness and importance of the initiative and will co-convene the Strategic Review with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC). Other UN system bodies have agreed to support and participate in the Strategic Review as an inter-agency, multi-stakeholder initiative.² Further, NGO and other partners have committed to joining the Strategic Review.³

In addition to assessing progress, a strategic review presents a forward-looking opportunity to identify key challenges and priorities, to develop comprehensive strategies and frame recommendations, through inter-governmental and other processes, for the future of the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda.

Much progress has been made in the protection and care of children in armed conflict. The adoption of the Cape Town Principles (1997) on the recruitment of children established the

¹ A/51/306 recommends that the Special Representative regularly “assess progress achieved and difficulties encountered in the implementation of the recommendations presented by the present study” (paragraph 267).

² In addition to the SRSG CAAC and UNICEF, UN system bodies involved to date are the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, International Labour Organization, Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Fund for Women, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

³ International NGOs participating to date include: CARE, Christian Children’s Fund, Coalition to stop the use of child soldiers, International Crisis Group, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children Alliance, Watchlist, Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children and World Vision.

standards for armed groups engaged in conflict. New normative measures have been taken, such as the Optional Protocols (2000) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989). Globally, demobilization and reintegration programmes include special measures for children and child recruitment violations are being prosecuted in international courts and justice processes. The recent passing of Security Council Resolution 1612, which mandates the monitoring and reporting of grave violations of child rights, significantly furthered the commitment of the UN and Member States to this issue.

However, although significant progress has been made, children in situations of conflict remain highly vulnerable to being recruited by armed groups, exploited, sexually abused, injured and killed. Further, since the original release of the Machel Study, the climate of conflict has changed dramatically. Diverse forms of political and armed violence have presented new threats in the protection of children.

The 10 year Strategic Review process provides an opportunity to refresh the unique multi-stakeholder mobilization and spirit generated by the original Machel Study. The Strategic Review will reframe action on children and armed conflict in view of UN reform and changes in the global policy environment. The Review will ensure a gender-sensitive approach and will emphasize child participation, especially that of adolescents.

Following consultations within the UN system and with NGOs and other partners, this proposal describes the Strategic Review and funding requirements.

OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND TIMEFRAME

The overall aim of the Strategic Review is to provide a visionary and forward looking strategy to address issues of children and armed conflict for the next 10 years. More specifically, the objectives of the 10 year Strategic Review are to:

- Highlight key areas of achievement and progress at the national and international levels in the last ten years and update the children affected by armed conflict agenda in view of the current global policy environment and UN reform;
- Identify emerging challenges, new threats, priorities, and comprehensive strategies to further advance the children and armed conflict agenda; and
- Refresh and reframe multi-stakeholder engagement and action.

To best capture the opportunity of the 10th anniversary and the multi-stakeholder mobilization of the original 1996 study, the 10 year Strategic Review is proposed as a one-year project involving a range of partnerships and methodologies. The main output of the Review will be a report submitted as a Special Annex to the Annual Report of the Special Representative to the General Assembly on children and armed conflict, for the 62nd General Assembly starting in September 2007. Subsequent months in the fall of 2007 will feature supplemental report products, launching events and follow up. An outline of the timeline and outputs will be as follows:

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| December 2006 – January 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Recruit and establish Review Secretariat▪ Initial meetings at management and technical advisory group levels▪ Initiate thematic research and symposia partnerships |
| February – June 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Timeframe for conducting and completing Review |

process, thematic research, etc.

July – August 2007

- Dedicated time to developing strategies and recommendations, writing report and submission to General Assembly

September – October 2007

- Preparation of supplemental report products
- Prepare launch events, media coverage

November 2007

- Launch events, including open debate and special activities with the Security Council and General Assembly
- Final management and technical advisory group meetings to ensure follow up is underway

BACKGROUND

Ms. Machel's 26 August 1996 report, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (A/51/306)*, was initiated by General Assembly resolution 48/157 of 20 December 1993. The study was supported by the then United Nations Centre for Human Rights (now the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights - OHCHR), and UNICEF. In particular, UNICEF provided fundraising and administrative support, including hosting the study Secretariat. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was also particularly active. The Machel Study featured a global process of research, involving a group of eminent persons, a team of experts, and NGO and other partnerships. The result provided a ground-breaking, comprehensive agenda to improve the protection of children's rights in situations affected by conflict.

In its annual agenda item on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, the General Assembly welcomed Ms. Machel's report and its recommendations (A/RES/51/77 of 12 December 1996), including establishing the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC).

Since the 1996 study, a number of notable milestones have been achieved and will contribute to the basis for the 10 year Strategic Review. In the follow-up to the 1996 report, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Canada hosted the first international inter-governmental conference dedicated to the issue of children affected by armed conflict in September 2000.⁴ In preparation for the Conference, Ms. Machel led the preparation of the *"Machel Review 1996-2000: A Critical Analysis of Progress Made and Obstacles Encountered in Increasing Protection for War-Affected Children"*. Governments at the Conference adopted the *"International Agenda for War-Affected Children"*. Further, the *"Machel Review"* formed the process for publication of Ms. Machel's book drawing on the findings and analysis of the 1996 report and *Machel Review*.⁵ The nearly annual reports of the Secretary

⁴ International Conference on War-Affected Children, 10-17 September 2000, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The project team established to produce the "Machel Review 1996-2000" and subsequent book published in 2001, was made possible by funding from the Governments of Canada and Norway to UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Canada submitted Ms. Machel's Review, and the "International Agenda for War-Affected Children" adopted by Governments at the Winnipeg Conference, for consideration by the UN General Assembly, 26 January 2001, A/55/749.

⁵ Machel, "The Impact of War on Children", UNICEF, 2001, C. Hurst & Co.

General to the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict, as well as those of the Special Representative to the General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights, also provide a source of regular information gathering.⁶ Other interim updates and analyses available include the Secretary General's 2004 report to the General Assembly of a "Comprehensive assessment of the United Nations system response to children affected by armed conflict."⁷

PROCESS, METHODOLOGIES AND KEY ISSUES

As noted above, the report of the 10 year Strategic Review will be prepared expressly for the 62nd session of the General Assembly. While the range of issues for children affected by armed conflict is wide and complex, the challenge is to convene a Review that is both inclusive and strategic. As a strategic review, the consultative process of the Review will highlight important updates and points of progress, identify challenges and emerging threats, and develop comprehensive strategies. Opportunities will be seized, such as previously planned field activities, meetings, and existing research initiatives.⁸

Methodologies and key components in the process of the 10 Year Strategic Review will include:

➤ High-level and inter-Ministerial meetings;

Building on the experience of the Eminent Persons Group for the 1996 Machel Study and the International Agenda adopted by Governments at the 2000 Conference in Winnipeg, Canada, select, high level round-tables will be convened in order to gain the inputs of influential leaders and mobilize their support for follow up to the 10 year Strategic Review. Some of these will be meetings involving influential policy, cultural and religious leaders who are not currently serving in government and others will seek opportunities and links with regional and other inter-governmental meetings.⁹

➤ Thematic expert meetings and symposia;

As a strategic alternative to regional consultations, a series of meetings or symposia on select priority issues will be convened by the Review. For example, discussions to date have noted concerns for children in the varying nature and definitions of conflict and political violence, as well as concerns surrounding the legal applications and tools used to improve the compliance of parties to conflict as issues for such symposia. A special consultation has also been proposed

⁶ To date, there have been 5 reports to the Security Council, starting in 2000, and 7 reports to the General Assembly, starting in 1998. S/2000/712 – A/55/163 of 19 July 2000, S/2001/852 – A/56/342 of 9 September 2001, S/2002/1299 of 26 November 2002, S/2003/1053 – A/58/546 of 10 November 2003 and S/2005/72 – A/59/695 of 9 February 2005. A/53/482 of 12 October 1998, A/54/430 of 1 October 1999, A/55/442 of 3 October 2000, A/56/453 of 9 October 2001, A/57/402 of 24 September 2002, A/58/328 of 29 August 2003 and A/59/426 of 8 October 2004.

⁷ A/59/331 of 3 September 2004. This report was in response to General Assembly resolution 57/190, requesting the Secretary-General to undertake "a comprehensive assessment of the scope and effectiveness of the United Nations system response to the issue of children and armed conflict" and tasked to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Consulting Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat.

⁸ Key linkages and opportunities include the meetings related to the review of the Cape Town Principles in Paris in 2007, regional inter-governmental meetings, the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and follow up processes to the United Nations Special Session on Children and UN Study on Violence against Children.

⁹ For example, the SRSG CAAC will incorporate consultations for the Strategic Review into opportunities to join inter-governmental regional meetings such as with the African Union, Association of South East Asian Nations and the European Union. The SRSG CAAC and UNICEF are in communication with Ms. Machel regarding her involvement in the Strategic Review.

with field-based, front-line child protection workers whose voices and practical experience are inadequately considered.

➤ Research partnerships and expert submissions;

As a multi-stakeholder, consultative process, the Review will involve a range of partnerships preparing inputs on particular themes or issues. For example, as with the original Machel Study, particular agencies or NGOs may take the lead in synthesizing lessons learned and best practices on a given theme and submit a special paper towards the 10 year Review's report. Some of this may take the form of desk reviews, while other dimensions will be prepared through thematic meetings as per above. This process will provide the Review with syntheses of inter-agency experience, case studies of best practice and practical country examples of successes and lessons learned. Key issues for the thematic meetings and research partnerships are further elaborated below.¹⁰ In addition, the Review will seek to capture the wide body of research and reports arising in the past ten years in a meta-analysis.

➤ A questionnaire to Member States;

Building on the success and experience of the questionnaire for the Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children, a brief questionnaire will be undertaken by the Review. The questionnaire will be framed by key recommendations made to Member States in the 1996 Machel Study. A questionnaire offers an important way to capture the different roles of Member States in protecting the rights of children in situations of armed conflict and opportunity for discussion and debate at the country level.

➤ Children's participation.

Including the experience and recommendations of children themselves is vital to the depth and veracity of the Strategic Review. Discussions are still underway between partners as to the best way to involve children in the Review. Discussions to date are exploring partnerships wherein a few field-based consultations will be held with children, to develop their own action plans and strategy recommendations as inputs to the Review. For example, the role of adolescents as peer educators in a variety of programming aspects – such as preventing and responding to HIV/AIDS, sexual exploitation and preventing recruitment – requires more concerted work with adolescents themselves.

The Review will seek to maximize the use of technologies that can facilitate the efficiency and inclusiveness of the consultations. For example, tele-conferences can be convened for some of the high-level and expert consultations. Tele-conferences will also be used for diverse stakeholder consultations, such as with UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators. Further, a dedicated web-page will be established for the Review, with links to the web-sites of the SRS/CAAC and UNICEF.

Identifying key issues for the Strategic Review

As noted above, the consultative process of the Review can highlight important updates and points of progress, as well as identify emerging challenges and key strategies. In particular, the Strategic Review will build on and complement the progress of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the Monitoring and Reporting system to synthesize

¹⁰ In addition, the SRS/CAAC will seek to integrate some of the research ideas proposed in her 2006 – 2007 strategic framework document into the process of the Strategic Review. This will ensure the efforts of different stakeholders are concerted and complementary as well as build follow up to the Strategic Review.

outstanding issues and broader strategies. Inter-agency consultations to date have emphasized the need for the children and armed conflict agenda to be more integrated and holistic. In this sense, the multi-faceted impacts of conflict on children and the linkages between 'special concerns' – children used by armed groups, sexual violence, trafficking, psycho-social support, child marriage, economic exploitation – will be more comprehensively framed through the process of the Strategic Review and resulting recommendations. Likewise, discussions to date have emphasized the role of social policy, social traditions and structures, legal action and advocacy to be as much a part of the framework as service delivery. In this sense, the Strategic Review will incorporate stronger linkages to child rights principles as the basis for action.

Pending evolving discussions for the Strategic Review, themes to be covered will be based on those of the original Machel Study and those in "*The Machel Review 1996-2000*". This will involve a strategic analysis of lessons learned, achievements and selected highlights. Such analysis can draw on the wide body of research and analysis conducted in the past ten years. To summarize, themes from the original Machel Study and 2000 Review include:

The 1996 report highlighted shortfalls in **health and nutrition, psychosocial well-being and education**, as article 39 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child obliges States Parties to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children affected by armed conflict.

Special concerns addressed in the 1996 report were: **child soldiers; refugee and internally displaced children; gender-based violence and sexual exploitation; landmines and unexploded ordnance; sanctions; changing patterns of conflict; and the inadequate implementation of international human rights and humanitarian law.**

The "Machel Review 1996-2000" updated these themes and expanded focus to include issues of: **HIV/AIDS; children in the peace and security agenda; improving monitoring and reporting; ending impunity for crimes against children; adolescents; arms and light weapons; reconstruction and reconciliation; women's role in peace-building; media and communications; supporting civil society; and inadequacies and disparities in mobilizing resources** for children affected by conflict.

The framework for the Strategic Review is not conducive to commissioning original statistical research. However, in reviewing and updating the above themes, the Review will draw on evolving progress on outcome indicators and contribute to efforts to establish baseline information. Key issues raised in consultations to date for new attention and analysis for the 10 year Strategic Review include:

- **Children in justice processes and reconciliation;**
 - While some important experience has been gained on issues for children in post-conflict international and transitional justice processes, such as truth and reconciliation commissions, further analysis and guidance is needed on this and on how to engage community reconciliation processes.
- **Children in the varying nature of conflicts;**
 - Issues to be explored under this theme include strategies for addressing situations where children are caught up in situations of evolving definitions of armed conflict and armed groups and the varying nature of conflict and levels of political violence or insurgency. Strategies are especially needed where situations are outside of the Security Council agenda. Important progress has been made in the last ten years to address impunity, but stakeholders see the

need to review and develop different tools and channels to improve the compliance of parties and duty-bearers.

- **Community based reintegration and youth opportunities;**

Issues to be explored under this theme include identifying effective community based reintegration strategies that engage adolescents and youth as positive stakeholders in their community. For example, challenges remain in identifying effective community-based reintegration strategies after 'disarmament and demobilization' processes and cross-analysis is needed between experience and best practice with children and that with youth. Strategic action research ideas and partnerships under discussion include exploring the application of social entrepreneur experience for community-based reintegration of children in post-conflict environments.

- **Remaining challenges in the area of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse;**

While progress is notable regarding accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse, other challenges related to gender-based violence need further analysis. Reaching girls in relationships with members of armed groups – including forced relationships – and bearing children, with appropriate and sensitive options is but one example.

- **Linkages across special concerns, such as trafficking and HIV/AIDs.**

It is increasingly recognized that the social structures and systems to support vulnerable children need to be engaged across conflict-affected contexts to mitigate the threats and impacts of HIV/AIDS. In this sense, consolidation and synthesis is needed of best practice and effective programme approaches that integrate multiple vulnerability factors for children and communities both during and after conflict.

ARCHITECTURE, STRUCTURE and BUDGET

The working level structure of the Strategic Review will be a Review Secretariat comprising a small staff team which will draw on technical assistance through a variety of partnerships and organizations. In terms of a funding mechanism, a special 'earmark' has been established within the Trust Fund already established for the OSRSG/CAAC. Staff, expenses and partner support or grants can all be administered from such a fund.

Architecture

The structure for the Strategic Review will involve technical and advisory groups in addition to the management and administrative aspects of conducting the Review.

Management level: As co-conveners, the OSRSG/CAAC and UNICEF will be the overall managers of the Strategic Review project. The Director of the Review Secretariat will meet regularly with the OSRSG/CAAC and UNICEF to ensure decisions are made in a timely manner and that the project is executed effectively.

Inter-agency advisory group: It is proposed that the 10-year Strategic Review be supported and guided by an advisory group building from the current CAAC Task Force and Steering Committee. Very few meetings will be necessary at principal level, but a dedicated group at working level should meet more regularly. The working level group should include NGO/civil society representation. The role of the inter-agency advisory

group is to provide regular guidance to the Review process and facilitate inputs from different organizations and stakeholders.

Technical reference group: Building on the experience of the Machel Study and 2000 Review process, a technical reference group will comprise senior technical experts from diverse locations and aspects of children and armed conflict best practice. This would be an expansion of the inter-agency advisory group, or there will at minimum be some members of the inter-agency advisory group that are also technical advisors. One of the key roles of the technical reference group will be to contribute to and/or review report draft material within their area of expertise as part of ensuring the quality and consensus of the report and its recommendations.

Leadership network: Building on the experience of the Eminent Persons Group at the time of the Machel Study, the 10 year Strategic Review will again include high-level persons representing diverse political, religious and cultural backgrounds.

Review Secretariat

The Review Secretariat will be comprised of 3 professionals and 1 assistant. A number of more part-time staff and technical assistance needs will be met by existing staff within OSRSG/CAAC and UNICEF. For example, in the areas of communications, public information and technology support, and for technical assistance, the Review will be drawing extensively on a wide network of OSRSG/CAAC, UNICEF, other UN entity and NGO professional staff inputs and participation.

Budget

The budget for the 10-year Strategic Review encompasses the secretariat team, operational needs and key elements of the process, such as thematic partnership research and symposia. The total budget requirements will be \$1,400,000 to \$1,500,000.